without the direction of the chief. Usually, a janmi family remained in situ over many generations. In addition, the janmi was obliged to lease off on long term tenure a large part of his lands to Nayar retainers and could not retract these without the tenant's consent or without the aid of a public assembly of tenants in case of ill-doing on the part of one of them.

Traditional villages are classifiable therefore as 1) Braham; 2) Temple; 3) Royal; 4) Chiefly; 5) Nayar headmen's villages. In some areas, a group of villages of the same type might be found adjacent to each other; this was particularly the case with "Brahman" and "Nayar headmen's" villages, where four or five might form a cluster headed by janmis of the same subcaste. [17] In each village, subordinate to the janmi's lineage in ritual rank and administrative power, came the members of one or other subcaste of Nayar retainers. Nayar retainers, whom I shall also call Military Nayars since most of them were soldiers, were divided into three subcaste: 1) retainers of Nambudiri Brahmans and of temples, called Sudra Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Illath Sudra Nayars in Cochin; 2) retainers of the royal lineage, or "palanquin-bearers," called Pallichans in all three kingdoms; and 3) retainers of the chiefs and the Nayar village headmen, called Charna Nayars in Calicut and Walluvanad and Swaroopattil Sudra Nayars in Cochin. Each of these subcastes disputed for ritual rank and in everyday circumstances would not interdine with each other. This dispute for rank was possible because they

occupied separate sets of villages and were not subject to each others' jurisdiction. In war, however, they might interdine freely and spend the night in each others' houses. In villages owned by Nambudiris or by Nambudiri-owned temples the retainer-Nayar were of group (1), in royal villages, of group (2), and in chiefly and village headmen's lineages, of group (3). In Calicut and Walluvanad however, group (3) was further subdivided into Agattu Charna Nayars or indoor retainers, [18] and Purattu Charnas or outdoor retainers. Purattu Charnas were retainers to chiefs and headmen, Agattu Charnas houseservants and clerks (with the title Menon - clerk) within the royal palaces. In Calicut, the Purattu Charnas were still further subdivided into ordinary Purattu Charnas who served chiefs and headmen, and special Purattu Charnas or Pariccha Menons who formed the personal bodyguard of the kind and senior princes.

In each village, there were traditionally four, five or six matrilineages of the appropriate retainer subcaste. The separate households or property-groups within each lineage had the hereditary right, granted by the Raja, to occupy freely stretches of garden land, and to lease large plots of wet rice land on long-term tenure from the janmi. This tenure was called kanam; the tenant, a kanamdar or kanakkaran. At the start of a period of tenure, the legal guardian (oldest man or karanavan) of the Nayar retainer household paid a lump sum in cash to the janmi, called kanam. Thereafter he paid an annual rent

582 servant castes or between temple servants on
837 the one hand and royalty, chiefs or village headmen, who belonged to separate hierarchies.

582 Hypergamous unions, even more than other
613 unions between Nayars of the same subcaste,
837 emphasized the exclusively sexual role of the lovers and genitors of a Nayar lineage. In most circumstances a higher caste lover lived and ate in his natal household and was maintained by it; he visited his mistress after supper and left before breakfast, after which he took a purifying bath before re-entering his natal house. He might not eat in his mistress's household, and following the morning bath might not touch her or his children. The only exception to these
[44] residential rules arose in the case of Nambudiris who had liaisons with royal women. These were received as temporary occupants of the palace and housed in separate buildings at the expense of the royal lineage, at some distance from the buildings occupied by the princes and the royal women. Like all other Nambudiri genitors of Nayar children, however, they [39] visited their mistresses at night and in the daytime carried out their ritual duties in private, attended by their own Nambudiri cooks and serving men.

613 It is clear however that hypergamous liaisons,
837 though of an almost exclusively sexual nature,
571 knit together the several castes concerned with the secular administration and with the religious law and public rituals of the state. Though not recognized by them as kinsmen, elderly members of aristocratic Nayar and temple servant

595 away from his village on military service. Buchanan, as late as 1807, reports that Nayar women vied with each other as to the number of lovers they could obtain. (p. 411).

595 584 644 [76] Until late in the nineteenth century, women evidently had freedom to choose their own lovers. This was until recently still the case in the royal lineages, where women selected their lovers from a small group of aristocratic Nambudiri families. Young men of these families were introduced into the palaces by older kinsmen already established there, and might become ensconced as regular occupants of the Nambudiri quarters until such time as they were dismissed by their royal mistresses. The princes of the lineage appear to have had little say in arranging these unions. I was told by one informant that the senior Raja periodically held an audience at which Nambudiris currently living in the palace were presented to him by his secretaries, but that otherwise he had little knowledge of

595 584 marital life within the palace. Today, as also in commoner lineages, this is no longer the case: monogamy has been customary in all subcastes for the past forty to fifty years, and the prospective husband of a woman is selected by her karanavan or elder brother. In orthodox families of the retainer subcastes, at least for the past fifty years, the karanavan or the elder brother of a woman has had the right to dismiss a husband of whom he disapproved. Alternatively

[582] a woman may still, as of old, divorce her husband at will by refusing him admittance or causing her kinsmen to place his sleeping mat

601 (m. sp.). Except in a few "modern" marriages men do not address the wife's kin by terms, but instead use the name and caste title: many informants said they would not use terms for the wife's kinsfolk because they did not feel that they were kin - a traditional attitude. The main modern change therefore is the extension of primarily matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal terms to parallel kin of the father's matrilineal group and their spouses. As it stands today, the terminological system thus faithfully reflects an extreme matrilineal system which has recently shifted towards bilaterality. [88]

613 VI. The Structure of the Royal Lineages

644 423 We saw that the traditional property-group of retainer Nayars divided into segments when male members of the mother's generation were all dead, and that correspondingly the lineages of retainer Nayars went through a gradual process of fission between their major segments every [427] few generations. This state of affairs was in harmony with the relatively temporary relationship of retainer Nayars to the land, as kanam tenants, since kanam tenure permitted segments of a tarayas to hive off at intervals with ease.

This was not the case with the property-groups of royal and naduvari lineages, which were held together for longer periods by their joint ownership of extensive jenmam lands and by their political offices. These royal and chiefly taravads in most cases developed a somewhat different structure which enabled them to cohere for

longer periods.

In all the royal and chiefly lineages, political office was normally held by the eldest member irrespective of branch. In several of these lineages, however, including Calicult, Walluvanad and Kolattiri, there existed also separate offices subordinate to that of the kind. In Calicut, the five oldest men of the Zamorin's lineage, irrespective of branch, held five offices or sthanams (occupant = sthani), each with a landed estate, separately from the lands jointly owned by each property-group of the lineage. The eldest sthani was the Zamorin who ruled at Calicut. The second was called Eralpad: he was the naduvari of Ernad, the oldest of the Zamorin's nads, from which his forbears originally sprang. To prevent rivalry with the [89] king, the second sthani was forbidden during his tenure of office to cross over into the Calicut nad until the Zamorin died and he was summoned to perform the funeral rites and receive the crown. The third sthani, the Munalpac, was commander-in-chief of the Zamorin's army: his estate was in Calicut but he travelled throughout the kingdom. The two youngest sthanis held no political office but lived as desavaris or independent landlords in separate villages of the kingdom. When the Zamorin or any of the other sthanis died, those below him in rank moved up one place, and the next eldest man was appointed as the fifth sthani.

From the 14th century until 1792, the Zamorin's lineage was able to cohere as a single property-group without partition between its

613 segments lifted out of their group on to separate
644 estates. The jointly owned land of the royal lin-
423 eage, in Ernaq, was managed by the sixth man karanavan after the fashion of an ordinary Na-
[701] yar property-group. As among Nayars, younger men of the lineage were trained as soldiers and fought in the Raja's wars.

However, it also happened that during these centuries, the Zamorin's lineage did not greatly increase in numbers. Indeed, in the 18th century it was obliged to save itself from extinction by adopting three girls from the royal lineage of Nileswaram in South Canara, north of Kerala. In 1792, the Zamorin was conquered by the British and, along with other rulers of what became Malabar District, retired from political office as the head of a large landowning lineage. The British to compensate the royal lineages gave them political pensions, payable in cash sums annually to each male and female. Shortly afterwards, the Zamorin's [90] lineage began to increase in size, and by the mid-nineteenth century had partitioned into three property-groups, Pudiya (New) Tavari which lives in a village in the modern Calicut division of Malabar District, Padinyare (West) Tavari, also in Calicut, and Kirakke (East) Tavari in Ernad Division. Pudiya Tavari has this century partitioned into three new property-groups. The extensive lands of each group are managed by their separate karanavans. The five sthanams with their landed estates are still occupied by the five eldest members of the lineage, who in addition receive their political pensions independently of the rest.

613 The whole exogamous lineage now has over 300
644 members. This growth in numbers in the Brit-
423 ish period is part of the general increase in population all over Kerala; it is paralleled in many other royal and commoner lineages.

613 Within each property-group of the Zamorin's
644 lineage, residential and economic arrangements
593 differ somewhat from those of retainers. We may take as an example Kirakke tavari in Ernad division. This property-group contains 172 members and is the largest of the property-groups. It has a time-depth of eight generations. Most of the members live in a single
[344] kovilagam (palace) in Kottakkal village. The palace is a vast block of buildings with a fort at each corner and is surrounded by a moat. Within its precincts are, apart from the residential buildings, a temple, an elementary school and a high school for children of the lineage and the Nayar children of princes, and four bathing pools. The palace has a central kitchen where food is cooked for all members, and two main wings to house men and women [91] respectively. There is separate accommodation for the Nambudiri Brahman husbands of the women, who live uxorilocally at the expense of the palace. Each prince, and each princess with her small children, has a separate suite of two rooms. Children remain with their mothers in the women's quarters until the age of 15 when the boys move into separate rooms in the men's quarters and are prohibited from visiting the women. Brother-sister avoidance is strict. If a man wishes to speak to his mother or an

613 elder sister or classificatory sister he must
644 send a messenger to call her into the common
593 hall. After the age of 15 he may not speak to a younger sister or classificatory sister, and may see them only in the distance. Contact between children and their Nambudiri fathers, as between princes and their Nambudiri brothers-in-law, is also restricted: the Nambudiris live and eat separately from the princes, served by their own Brahman servants. It is obvious that such restrictions on social relations within the palace militate against affinal and intertavari quarrels, as well as against incest.

613 On all four sides of the palace are roads lead-
644 ing into the village. This is crowded with the
361 houses of Nayar retainers, each one of which
427 is in some way connected with the palace, and leases kanam lands from it. Many dwelling-groups are those of the princes' Nayar wives and children, chiefly of the Pariccha Menon subcaste; their forbears formed the private army of the Zamorin in traditional times. Other somewhat poorer households belong to the Agattu Charna and Pallichan subcastes; both men and women work in the place, since each adult member living in it employs two Nayar servants of his or her own sex to do housework and act as messengers. The servants are still paid daily in rice.

613 [92] The lands of the kovilagam are held in the
644 name of the eldest woman, but are managed by
423 the karanavan who also receives and distributes the pensions of his group in amounts which differ according to age-rank in the group. This

613 is a recent practice which grew out of the de-
644 mands for separate payments of those princes
423 who had left the palace to find modern work outside. Until about ten years ago, the karanavan completely controlled the group's finances and paid maintenance in kind to its members, even to toilet requisites such as oil for bathing and ash for cleaning the teeth. Since they began to receive allowances in cash, several princes have acquired private land and built small houses for their wives and children, where a very few of them now live and eat, despite caste rules against interdining with lower caste kinsfolk. In addition some princes now work in government service or in one of the coast towns or in one of the large cities of India. They return to the palace only for vacations and ceremonies. The lands of the major royal property-groups of Malabar are at present declared impartible by law, but there is dissatisfaction with this law among their younger members. Individual partition of property, in accordance with the new Nayar inheritance laws to be explained below, is expected to take place in most palaces within the next few years, and has already been applied for in some. The royal lineages are in fact now breaking down in precisely the same manner as are retainer Nayar taravads.

It is clear, however, that royal property-groups were traditionally able to comprise more segments and cohere for longer periods than could retainer groups. The differences in structure which made this possible were: 1) the landed estates which were large enough to [93]

613 support many members and, together with the
644 political office, had a sentimental value for
423 them; 2) sthanams, which lifted the five oldest men out of the factionalism of their property-groups; 3) the spacious construction of palaces with privacy for each woman and her descendants, each adult man, and each visiting Nambudiri husband; 4) the very rigid rules of etiquette and avoidance which discouraged quarrels between men and incest between men and women; 5) the ability of the palace to employ separate servants for each adult; and 6) the peculiar residence-arrangements in royal and a few chiefly lineages, which, together with the universal practice of hypergamy, gave the property-group some of the features of a matriclan (14) and enabled it to live for generations on the same site. The existence of Nambudiri Brahmans as a leisure class of ritual specialists, many of whom were free to leave their own estates and live as drones (or "as breeding bulls", as one Calicut prince remarked) in the palaces, was crucial to this, as was the ability of the royal lineage, because of the concentration of wealth and political power in its hands, to maintain a horde of retainer lineages at its doorstep to provide mistresses for the princes and a bodyguard for the king.

613 In spite of these special devices, royal and
644 chiefly lineages did, even traditionally, divide into separate property-groups when their numbers became unwieldy. Unfortunately I lack genealogies to show whether, as in retainer lineages, this regularly occurred at a particular

613 point in their development. There is plenty of
644 historical evidence, however, to show that they did so. In many cases, especially of the smaller Rajas and the chiefs, the kingdom or chiefdom was also divided between the segments at some point after their own private estates had been partioned.

613 [94] Reference to Map 7 helps to clarify this
644 statement. Nads I and II (Kolattunad and Arik-
631 kal) were once united under the Kolattiri Rajas, but nad II early broke away as a small independent chiefdom ruled by a segment of the lineage which had been converted to Islam by the Arabs. Nad I, which remained the kingdom of Kolattiri, was subdivided into smaller nads ruled by Samantan naduvaris. There are today several lineages of these, but Innes reports that they have all split off from one of two original lineages. Nad II was similarly ruled by a high class Nayar chieftain lineage (14) which at various times was feudatory to Kolattiri. This lineage divided into several branches each of which took as portion of the nad and ruled it independently. Nad IV was also once ruled by a single naduvari lineage as one property-group (Mithangath Kovilagath Thottoli), as feudatory of Kolattiri. In 1766, the group partitioned its properties between its five segments, but retained the office of naduvari, and also a second athanam, for the first and second man of the whole lineage.

The Kurumbranad Rajas, (nad X), like the Kolattiri Rajas, are said to be one of the oldest ruling families of Kerala and to have received their nad from the last of the Perumals. The

1/1 [See p. 105, category 116 --- Analyst]

613 The area ruled by the Kurumbranad Rajas is
644 thought to have once extended as far south as
631 nad XI, where it bordered on the Zamorin's territory, and as far north as nads IV and VI. Nad IX was formerly ruled by the Rajas of Kollam, who are thought to have been an independent segment of the Kurumbranad family. The Kollam Rajas were conquered and expelled by the Zamorins.

The Kottayam Rajas, who ruled nads VII and XXX, and were in possession of nad XI for a short time before the British took over, are said by some informants to have once formed one lineage with the Kurumbranad Rajas, (with whom Innes too reports that they were "closely related".) This is likely, since the two lineages acknowledge each other to be Kshattriyas, but will not intermarry. Innes also reports that nad XXX (a mountainous, sparsely populated area) was conquered by Kottayam and Kurumbranad together and later divided between them. Before the British came, the Kottayam lineage redivided and one property-group, Parassi, became independent chieftains over part of nad VI. When the Muslims invaded from Mysore the main branch of the Kottayam family fled temporarily to Travancore and in their absence Parassi became rulers of nads VI and XXX. They later opposed the British settlement of Malabar and were therefore deposed and not given a pension. Parassi and Kottayam (who returned) are still independent lineages but do not yet intermarry. The Payyormala Nayar chieftains of nad VIII who ruled as feudatories

613 of Kurumbranad, were also once one lineage,
644 which divided its rule and its lands between
631 three segments. This nad, like nads X and XI was for a short time conquered by the Zamorin, and its rulers, along with the Kurumbranad Rajas, became his feudatories.

The Kadattunad Rajas of nad VII are not one of the oldest lineages of Kerala and are not a segment of one of the neighbouring lineages. Krishna Iyer reports (15) that [96] Kadattunad was once a branch of the Porlattiri royal lineage which once ruled nad XII. The Porlattiri lineage was the first to be dispossessed by the Zamorin and its members are said to have fled north and sought refuge with the Kolattiri lineage. Innes says that the Kadattunad lineage sprang from the union of a Kolattiri woman with a Porlattiri man, but our informants in North Malabar thought that Kadattunad are descended from a Kolattiri man who gave this nad to his Porlattiri wife and children, in accordance with a common North Malabar custom.

The Pulavayi Nayar chieftains of nad XIV were once independent rulers in their jungly nad, but became nominal feudatories of the Zamorin. Their lineage and rule were also divided into several branches. Nads XIII and XV were once united under the Parappu royal lineage, which divided its nad between two branches, both of which were early overrun by the Zamorin. The Beyport Rajas' lineage, which remained as a feudatory of the Zamorin and is still extant, is a branch of the Parappu lineage. Nads XXIII and XXIV were similarly once one with nad XXV

613 under the Palghat Rajas, but the Zamorin drove
644 a wedge into their territory in the 18th century
631 and took nad XXV. The other two nads were divided between two branches of the Palghat lineage.

Nad XXVIII was formerly ruled by the Chavakkad Rajas, whose lineage became a feudatory of Cochin. The lineage divided into four tavaris, which quarreled with each other for political power. One of these branches, known as the Rajas of Punnattur, finally appealed to the Zamorin for [97] support against the other three, which were supported by Cochin. The Zamorin came to their help, overran the whole nad, and made its rulers feudatory to himself.

The Vellatiri Rajas, who ruled nad XIX and formerly nads XX and XXI as the kingdom of Walluvanad, remained a small lineage and, like the Zamorins, did not partition until the British began to rule. Their numbers then increased and they are now divided into four palaces.

Since the Zamorin's lineage, which maintained its kingdom intact, was one which happened not to increase in numbers or divided its property-group over four centuries, it might be thought tempting to argue that the cohesion of each kingdom traditionally depended on the cohesion of its royal lineage.

However, we must be clear in recognizing that the cohesion and expansion of the Zamorin's kingdom, and to a lesser extent of that of Cochin, and later of Travancore, depended on factors other than the structure of their royal lineages. Chief of these factors were, it seems likely,

613 644 631 the expansion of overseas' trade with the Arabs and later, the Europeans, from the twelfth to the eighteenth centuries; the developments of better means of communication in the larger kingdoms of the plains, where this was not too difficult; some ammassing of wealth in the hands of rulers; and leading from this, their ability to organize larger armies which (especially after the adoption of gun-warfare) permitted them to conquer neighbouring weaker nads. The persistence of these larger units seems to have depended on the strength of their new political institutions, chiefly [98] the militia and the central courts of justice, as well as on a widening of the field of social relations of the "good" castes who controlled the administration. Along with this went a very slow process of social mobility in the upper reaches of the society. The caste system of rulers, chiefs, village headmen and retainers was not entirely stationary: retainer-lineages which had distinguished themselves in war were sometimes appointed as desavaris and gradually changed their ritual rank, and it was possible for a desavari lineage to increase in wealth and be made a naduvari lineage, or for a small naduvari lineage to increase in wealth (as did the Zamorins), expand its territory, and call itself a royal lineage, claiming the rank of Kshattriyas. This process took some time, indeed; it was not until the eighteenth century that the Zamorin's lineage, after going through a ceremony in which its members passed through the body of a golden cow, were able to claim that

613 644 631 525

613 they had been reborn as Kshattriyas, and to
644 shake off their marital ties with feudatory lin-
631 eages and marry their women only to Nambu-
565 diris. The same process went on in other parts of Kerala; it is even whispered by some in North Malabar that the Kadattunad lineage started out as a high class Nayar taravad with the title of Adiodi and, through outstanding military services and marriage alliances with Kolattiri, gradually established itself first as naduvaris and later as an independent royal lineage.

613 The size and cohesion of a kingdom thus de-
644 pended not on kinship factors but on political
631 and economic factors such [99] as trade, eco-
601 nomic specialization and the development of specialized political institutions. When their kingdoms and private estates became large, the kinship systems of the royal lineages adapted themselves to this change: they modified their residence-patterns, practised exclusively hypergamous marriage, and developed the institution of athanams. It is arguable that had their economy and political institutions developed still further before the British came, they would have been obliged to change their kinship system still more, for the unwieldy structure of matrilineal lineages, with segments periodically hiving off and claiming themselves independent, certainly made it difficult to establish a stable

613 system of succession to the crown. The history
644 of the Cochin lineage, which had two athanams
631 and in the fifteenth century partitioned into five property-groups, was from 1510 to 1792 one of perpetual dissension between the heads of

613 property-groups. These in turn scrambled for
644 the crown and in turn allied themselves with the
631 Zamorins, the Portuguese and the Travancore Rajas to help them to establish their claims. Despite periodic total conquest by one or other neighbouring ruler, however, the kingdom was never divided between its segments as were many of the smaller chiefdoms, I think because, like Calicut and Walluvanad, it had developed trade and centralized political institutions which would not permit of its reversion to smaller units. Whether, had their kingdoms grown much larger the rulers would have been obliged to abandon the matrilineal system, is a question which cannot be answered out of the data available. [100]

At all events it is clear that despite its militia and relatively centralized administration, the whole political structure of the central area, as well as the kinship system of its rulers, depended for its persistence on a relatively stationary or only very gradually changing economy which would permit the perpetuation of hereditary political offices. For the administration, managed by the "good" upper castes, was built up round a network of kinship ties. Nambudiris fathered the Rajas and sporadically, the high caste population at large; the Rajas fathered the chieftains, and the chieftains the desavaris; while the whole retainer Nayar population, despite its division into karas, villages, and lineages linked in perpetual affinal kinship, was also united throughout the kingdom by the practice of sexual unions between the mobile

613 soldiers and Nayar women stationary in their
644 villages. It was left to the British, with their
631 introduction of a new highly specialized expanding economy with mechanized industry, to crack the system apart. This was essentially a small-scale feudal system - (the Zamorin's kingdom, at the height of its power, cannot have had more than 500,000 inhabitants) - and it depended on the existence of a fairly stable economy with the village as the basic social unit, self-sufficient for food. [101]

NOTES

162 (1) In 1931 the matrilineal castes numbered
[611] roughly one-fifth of the total population.
(2) Muslims in 1931 numbered about 15% of the total population, being concentrated chiefly in the south of Malabar District. The first conversions to Islam were probably carried out in the ninth century by Arab traders who visited the coast. This community, called the Mappillas, increased greatly after the fourteenth century, but particularly during the Muslim invasions from Mysore in the 1760's. The Muslims of North Malabar District follow matrilineal descent with matrilocal residence; those of other areas follow patriliny. For a brief account of
[113] North Malabar Muslim kinship see Gough, "Incest Prohibitions and Rules of Exogamy in three matrilineal groups of the Malabar Coast", in Int. Archives of Ethnography, June 1952.

The Christians of Kerala numbered about 20% of the population in 1931. The Syrian Christians,

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906) 1912
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2. *Kaimal* (from *kai*, hand, meaning power).—The Kaimals were, according to tradition, the fighting masters of Cochin and Malabar. At one time, they were in charge of the royal treasury, which by respected custom could not be visited by the Rajas themselves, except in the presence of the Kaimals. "Neither could they", says Barbosa, "take anything out of it without a great necessity, and by the council of this person and certain others." They were also the chieftains or rulers of certain localities, owing a kind of allegiance to the ruler of the State. Many of the Kaimal families are still in existence, such as the Koratti Kaimal, Cherukayil Kaimal and others.

3. *Kurup*.—This is also a title attached to the names of many Nayar families and is also assumed by other castes. Some of them were military instructors (Kalari Kurups) in the old royal families of Cochin and in North Malabar. [1]

4. *Panikkar*.—The word comes from *pani*, meaning work. The Panikkars originally kept *kalaries* (fencing or gymnastic schools with a sort of private chapel attached to it) in Cochin, Malabar and Travancore. They are spoken of by the Portuguese writers as the strength of the country. They are no longer in charge of *kalaris* but are now engaged in other occupations. Some are experts in sword play.

5. *Nayar*.—The Pathináyirathil (10,000) and Muppathináyirathil (30,000) Nayars who constitute the forty thousand belonged to the Kiriyam and Chárna castes. The title was generally conferred in Malabar by kings or feudal chiefs, but in the State it was mostly assumed by the Sudrás who had not received other titles.

6. *Menon*.—The word is a contraction of *mél*, above, and *avan*, he, and means a superior person. The title was given to many Nayar families or individuals by the rulers of Cochin. As soon as a person received this title, he was presented with an *óla* (palmyra leaf) and an iron style for writing thereon. This is symbolical of the profession of an accountant. Even now, in Cochin and British Malabar, each *amsom* or revenue village has a writer or an accountant who is called a Ménón. The title of *Menókki* means one who looks over or superintends, and is found only in British

1. Ethnographic appendices, page 131.

9:Iyer E-4, 5 (ca. 1902-1906)1912
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Nayar

and the Rajas were mostly guided by their own will and pleasure unless it ran counter to the customs of the country. Many of them had learned Brahmans to instruct them in the fundamental and long established laws of the country.

Certain checks upon their arbitrary power existed in the form of general assemblies of the nation, but these were seldom held. These were of two kinds: those assembled under the orders of the Raja, and those assembled by the spontaneous will of the people. In the former case, messengers, who by right of birth and descent were entitled to that office, were despatched in all directions to summon the people. When assembled, they sat in a circle in the open air, while a number of Nayars kept guard over them. The propositions were then discussed, and the measures proposed were rejected or adopted by the unanimous silence or clamour of those present, but in affairs of minor importance not affecting the welfare of the whole community, the chiefs of the nation were summoned, and they decided the questions laid before them.

The assemblies summoned by the will of the nation were conducted in much the same manner, but with more impetuosity. They were held only in cases of emergency, when the Raja was guilty of extreme tyranny or of gross violation of the law. Then all the landed proprietors were bidden to attend, and if any one dared to refuse to obey the summons, the assembly sentenced his houses, gardens or estates to be devastated. If he persisted in his disobedience, he would be deprived of his privileges and votes, and might even be sentenced to banishment. As the object of such assemblies was to thwart the will of the ruler, he on his side did all he could to obstruct their holding such assemblies. The Raja had no right nor power to prevent them by force of arms, but he sent *Pandara Patti* (servants of the rulers) to provoke them with all manner of annoyances and to pelt them with stones, sand, and dirt. The Nayars on guard did their best to keep off the assailants with their shields, and, if any one of them, provoked beyond endurance, were to strike or hurt one of the youths, it would be regarded as treason, and, as such, the assembly would be liable to a heavy fine and would be deprived of its inviolability. The Raja might then disperse them by force of arms; but if he failed to subdue them, they would all desert their allegiance. Allies and neighbours did their best to intercede between the parties and to secure for everyone his proper rights.

13: Thurston & Rangachari E-4, 5 (no date)
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Travancore. It is a distinctive suffix to the names of Nāyar sons of Travancore Sovereigns. But, in ancient times, this title was conferred on others also, in recognition of merit. Tambis alone proceed in palanquins, and appear before the Mahārāja without a head-dress. The consorts of Mahārājas are selected from these families. If a lady from outside is to be accepted as consort, she is generally adopted into one of these families. The title Kārta, or doer, appears also to have been used as a titular name by some of the rulers of Madura. [At the Madras census, 1901, Kartākkal was returned by Balijas claiming to be descendants of the Nāyak kings of Madura and Tanjore.] The Tekkumkur and Vadakkumkur Rājas in Malabar are said to have first conferred the title Karta on certain influential Nāyar families. In social matters the authority of the Karta was supreme, and it was only on important points that higher authorities were called on to intercede. All the Kartas belong to the Illam sub-division of the Nāyar caste. The title Kuruppu, though assumed by other castes than Nāyars, really denotes an ancient section of the Nāyars, charged with various functions. Some were, for instance, instructors in the use of arms, while others were superintendents of maid-servants in the royal household. Writing concerning the Zamorin of Calicut about 1500 A.D., Barbosa states that "the king has a thousand waiting women, to whom he gives regular pay, and they are always at the court to sweep the palaces and houses of the king, and he does this for the State, because fifty would be enough to sweep." When a Mahārāja of Travancore enters into a matrimonial alliance, it is a Kuruppu who has to call out the full title of the royal consort, Panappillai Amma, after the presentation of silk and cloth has been performed. The title Panikkar is derived from pani, work.

556 553 424 [644] [584] [547] [643] [564] [644] 175 556 644 643 584 553 644

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556 553 644 [875] It was the Panikkars who kept kalaris, or gymnastic and military schools, but in modern times many Panikkars have taken to the teaching of letters. Some are entirely devoted to temple service, and are consequently regarded as belonging to a division of Mārans, rather than of Nāyars. The title Kaimal is derived from kai, hand, signifying power. In former times, some Kaimals were recognised chieftains, *e.g.*, the Kaimal of Vaikkattillam in North Travancore. Others were in charge of the royal treasury, which, according to custom, could not be seen even by the kings except in their presence. "Neither could they," Barbosa writes, "take anything out of the treasury without a great necessity, and by the counsel of this person and certain others." The titles Unnithan and Valiyathan were owned by certain families in Central Travancore, which were wealthy and powerful. [692] They were to some extent self-constituted justices of the peace, and settled all ordinary disputes arising in the kara where they dwelt. The title Menavan, or Menon, means a superior person, and is derived from mel, above, and avan he. The recipient of the title held it for his life-time, or it was bestowed in perpetuity on his family, according to the amount of money paid down as atiyara. As soon as an individual was made a Menon, he was presented with an ola (palmyra leaf for writing on) and an iron style as symbols of the office of accountant, which [451] he was expected to fill. In British Malabar even now every amsam or revenue village has an accountant or writer called Menon. The title Menokki, meaning one who looks over or superintends, is found only in British Malabar, as it was exclusively a creation of the Zamorin. [They are, I gather, accountants in temples.]

564 "There are numerous sub-divisions comprised under the general head Nāyar, of which the most important,

564 country. They are confined to a few localities in
[184] Travancore, and until recently there was a distinctive
[463] difference in regard to dress and ornaments between the Tamil Padam and the ordinary Nāyars. The occupation of the Padamangalakkar is temple service, such as sweeping, carrying lamps during processions, etc. The Tamil Padakkar are believed to have taken to various kinds of occupation, and, for this reason, to have become merged with other sections.

5. Vāthi or Vātti.—This name is not found in the Jatinirnaya, probably because it had not been differentiated from Mārān. The word is a corruption of vāzhti, meaning praying for happiness, and refers to their
[534] traditional occupation. They use a peculiar drum, called nantuni. Some call themselves Daivampatis, or wards of God, and follow the makkathāyam system of inheritance (in the male line).

6. Itacheri or Idacheri, also called Pantaris in
[234] South Travancore. They are herdsmen, and vendors of milk, butter and curds. The name suggests a relation of some kind to the Idaiyan caste of the Tamil country.

7. Karuvelam, known also by other names, such as
[644] Kappiyara and Tiruvattar. Their occupation is service in the palace of the Mahārāja, and they are the custodians of his treasury and valuables. Fifty-two families are believed to have been originally brought from Kolathanād, when a member thereof was adopted into the Travancore royal family.

8. Arikuravan.—A name, meaning those who reduced the quantity of rice out of the paddy given to them to husk at the temple of Kazhayakkuttam near Trivandrum, by which they were accosted by the local chieftain.

9. Pallichchan.—Bearers of palanquins for Brāhmans and Malabar chieftains. They are also employed

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has been explained to me as emanating from a command of the Kōlatirri Rājah in days gone by, when, the Arabs having come to the country about Calicut, there was a chance of the women being seized and taken as wives. The explanation is somewhat fanciful. The prohibition to cross the river to the northwards is supposed to have originated in much the same way. As bearing on this point, I may mention that the Nāyar women living to the east of Calicut cannot cross the river backwater, and come into the town." It may be noted in this connection that the Paikāra river on the Nīlgiri hills is sacred to the Todas, and, for fear of mishap from arousing the wrath of the river-god, a pregnant Toda woman will not venture to cross it. No Toda will use the river water for any purpose, and they do not touch it, unless they have to ford it. They then walk through it, and, on reaching the opposite bank, bow their heads. Even when they walk over the Paikāra bridge, they take their hands out of the putkuli (body-cloth) as a mark of respect.

The complexity of the sub-divisions among the Nāyars in North Malabar is made manifest by the following account thereof in the Gazetteer of Malabar. "There are exogamous sub-divisions (perhaps corresponding to original tarwāds) called kulams, and these are grouped to form the sub-castes which are usually endogamous. It is quite impossible to attempt a complete account of the scheme, but to give some idea of its nature one example may be taken, and dealt with in some detail; and for this purpose the portion of Kurumbranād known as Payyanād will serve. This is the country between the Kōttapuzha and Pōrapuzha rivers, and is said to have been given by a Rāja of Kurumbranād to a certain Ambādi Kōvilagam Tamburātti (the stānam or title of the senior lady of the Zāmorin Rāja's family). In